



HENSON VALLEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
( Disciples of Christ )  
1900 Tucker Road  
Fort Washington, MD 20744  
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## JANUARY 2016 UPDATE

### ***DEVOTIONAL – A Taste of God***

A curious thing happens to us when we get a taste of God. It happened first in Eden and it keeps happening. The experience *of* God – the ecstasy, the wholeness of it – is accompanied by a temptation to reproduce the experience *as* God. The taste *for* God is debased into a greed to *be* God. Being loved by God is twisted into a lust to God-performance. I get a glimpse of a world in which God is in charge and think maybe I have a chance at it. I abandon the personal presence of God and take up with the depersonalized and canny serpent. I flee the shining face of God for a slithery world of religion that gives me license to manipulate people and acquire god-like attributes to myself. The moment I begin cultivating the possibility of acquiring that kind of power and glory for myself, I most certainly will want to blot out the face, flee from the presence of the Lord, and seek a place where I can develop pride and acquire power.

*When Simon saw that the apostles by merely laying on hands conferred the Spirit, he pulled out his money, excited, and said, “Sell me your secret! Show me how you did that! How much do you want? Name your price!”*

*Peter said, “To hell with your money! And you along with it. Why, that’s unthinkable – trying to buy God’s gift!”*

Acts 8: 18 - 20

***“Living the Message:  
Daily Reflections with Eugene Peterson”***  
*HarpersCollins 1996*

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### **FOR YOUR INFORMATION, PRAYERFUL REFLECTION, FAITHFUL ACTION**

- Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation Update
  - Carolyn Holland attended The Therapeutic Sensory Room Open House that was sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department of the Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission on 1 December 2015. The event was held at the South Bowie Community Center. The Open

House provided an opportunity to gain an understanding of 1) how to use the Therapeutic Sensory Room, 2) the associated fees, and 3) the reservation process. Carolyn shares her experience with you:

Hello Family:

I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the Therapeutic Sensory Room inside the South Bowie Community Center. The Therapeutic Sensory Room opened on a very rainy December 1, 2015. I was thinking that the rain would keep anyone from attending the opening, however it slowly began to fill with children, parents and caregivers. Once inside, I was drawn to the many colors and lighting effects throughout the room. I was given a quick tour of the individual stations and was then encouraged to hang around and explore on my own. The Therapeutic Sensory Room offered different stations for fun, relaxation and calming. There were colorful circles on the floor where you could jump from one to the other for musical sounds or play musical hop scotch on a soft mat that lights up. A ball pit was stationed in one corner where the side panels would light up when they are bumped against and music could be filtered in via an iPod or MP3 player. For relaxation there is a soft rocker with a massage pad and my personal favorite, the free flowing chair with strands of fiber optic lights which I found to be very tranquil. There was even a disco ball suspended from the ceiling with lights from the different stations reflecting off it. This state of the art facility also contains a water wall, talking cube, bubble mirror, bubble tube, sound responsive light wall and a UV tactile panel. What is most unique about the Therapeutic Sensory Room are all the stations that you respond to, respond back to you whether by sound or light. All in all I found the Therapeutic Sensory Room to be a very nurturing environment with activities to aid children and adults with or without disabilities.

- The Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts provided an interactive program for the families who participate in the Infants and Toddlers Program of Prince George's County Public Schools on 5 December 2015. This program was co-sponsored by the school system and the Arc of Prince George's County, both partners with Henson Valley in our ministry to the differently-abled and their families. There was singing, dancing, reading, riding a (stationary) pony, puppets, musical instruments, conversation, and of course, snacks. Parents and children had the opportunity to learn through play and enjoy one another in the company of others who share a similar journey.
- Melissa Ezelle of the Arc of Prince George's County has shared that another Community-based team will be launched in the New Year. She and the differently-abled young people served by her program will be engaging in fitness activities, performance and theater based activities, and using assistive technology devices to build profile books and resumés. They will

also be engaging in entrepreneurial endeavors (including bake sales and making art to sell at local craft fairs), and so much more!

Melissa shares that the Arc of Prince George's County has a Fitness Partnership with Neighborhood Fitness Studios and the fitness activities mentioned above will begin this month (see the dates below and the Church Calendar). She invites any adult Henson Valley congregants who are differently-abled and who are able to ambulate (with or without assistive devices) to feel welcome to join the fitness classes. Other persons attending the classes are those who participate in the Day Centers sponsored by the Arc of Prince George's County.

The fitness class dates scheduled for January 2016 are:

Tuesday, January 19th: Fitness Class/Wheelchair Fitness.

Thursday, January 21st: Fitness Class/Ambulatory.

Tuesday, January 26th: Fitness Class/Ambulatory.

Thursday, January 28th: Fitness Class/Ambulatory.

- The first Respite Day sponsored by Henson Valley was held at the church on Saturday, 12 December. Sixteen (16) differently-abled young people were in attendance along with ten (10) staff members from 2<sup>nd</sup> Family, Inc. who brought residents of their group home to participate. Alexis Holland served as the leader of this ministry and was ably assisted by other young adults in the congregation. Thanksgivings are extended to Jerri Holland, Denise Idun, Danielle Azu, Ellen K. Azu, and Kalonji Griffin for their assistance with the activities that were planned for our guests and for helping to serve lunch to them. Among the activities prepared for the day were designing T-shirts, board games, group dancing, and storytelling. Supporting the young adults with their presence and their participation were Marilyn Miles, Bessie Bradford, Carolyn Holland, Ellen Azu, and Pastor Martha. A special "Thank You" is extended to Mrs. Kanzada Douglass, a friend to Henson Valley, who serves as a consultant to and participant in the congregation's ministry to the differently-abled. She donated the board games, some reading books, and coloring books for the event. The caregivers of our guests expressed gratitude for the opportunity for their differently-abled loved ones to be part of this day of activities and reported great satisfaction with the program that was planned.
- On Monday, 21 December, members from the Henson Valley choir and the Community Singers of Crofton presented a very special program of holiday music for the residents and staff of Springbook, a group home that is part of the support programs offered by our partners, the Arc of Prince George's County, to those who are differently-abled. Traditional carols as well as the fun songs of the season were part of the program. From "Silent Night" to "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer," the choir's performance engaged the audience. They sang with the choir, clapped their hands to the beat,

and listened attentively to the solos that were included in the program. Mrs. Sheila Woods, who is the program director for the group homes managed by the Arc of Prince George's County, expressed sincere gratitude for the program and has invited the choir back for future programs. Minister of Music, Marilyn Miles, shared that this experience was meaningful to the choir members as well and plans to incorporate Springbrook into the rotation of nursing and group homes for which the choir members and the Community Singers present programs. At some time in the future, Mrs. Woods plans to bring some of the residents of Springbrook to Henson Valley to join us for Sunday worship. Now that will be quite wonderful, don't you think so?

- Henson Valley Christian Church is in partnership with the Special Education Department of James Ryder Randall Elementary School and provides materials and supplies upon request of the Director. To date, the congregation has contributed wipes, diapers, clothes, anti-bacterial soaps, paper towels, plastic ziplock bags, a color ink cartridge, and various school supplies in support of the students and the teachers.

The school is also participating in the "Boxtops for Education" program. Please consider purchasing food and household items that carry the official "Boxtops for Education" coupon. Cut the coupon off the items, bring the coupons to the church, and place them in the lime green gift bag that sits on the James Ryder Randall school supply table.

- Henson Valley Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is in conversation with Ms. Nikki Guy-Dixon, who is the Faculty Extension Assistant, 4-H Youth Development Program of the University of Maryland Extension Program. We are discussing the possibility of hosting an activity club for differently-abled young people. If there is interest, a meeting with Ms. Guy-Dixon and interested family members will be scheduled so that dialogue can had in response to the following questions:

1. What type of activities would be of most interest to the participants and what day(s) of the week and what time of the day would work best?
2. Given that there would be a need for volunteers to help run the club, are there family members or friends who would be willing to be trained as volunteers?
3. Would some of the differently-abled persons who are post high school age be interested in serving as mentors or assistants?

Ms. Guy-Dixon will provide information related to the programs that are available, the process for establishing one or more programs that could be hosted at Henson Valley, and the commitment that would be needed to sustain the club(s).

- The next Leadership Team meeting will be held on Saturday, 23 January at 1:00 p.m. Members of the Henson Valley Christian Church Leadership Team are: Carolyn Holland, Bessie Bradford, Marilyn Miles, Rev. Mel Larson, Ellen Azu, and Pastor Martha.

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## **OUT-AND-ABOUT IN THE REGION (The Christian Church Capital Area) – ITEM #1**

- **9 January 2016** – The Nominating Committee will meet at a location to be announced. This group convenes to identify potential leaders for Regional offices and committees.
- **16 January 2016** – The Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Celebration will be held at Mt. Olivet Christian Church (located at First Christian Church – Baltimore) from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- **23 January 2016** – The Regional Board will meet from 8:30 a.m. – noon at Henson Valley Christian Church.
- **14 – 15 October 2016** – The 2016 Regional Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Capital Area will be held at the Clarion Hotel and Conference Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

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## **REMINDERS FROM THE GENERAL CHURCH (The Christian Church Disciples of Christ in the United States and Canada)**

- **11 January 2016** – National Human Trafficking Awareness Day
- **18 January 2016** – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- **18 – 25 January 2016** – Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- **24 – 30 January 2016** – Week of the Laity
- Contact Disciples Home Missions for an African American History Month Resource Packet
- Contact Disciples Home Missions for “Black Disciples Who Made a Difference” Resource, Series 1 – 3



## IN THE LIFE OF THE CONGREGATION

### – Upcoming Events and Programs

January 1, 2016	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Have a Healthy and Happy New Year!</b></p>	Church Office Closed !
January 3	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Second Sunday after Christmas Day</i></b> ( <i>Rev. Dr. Martha A. Brown, Preaching</i> )</p>	9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship 12:30 p.m. Chime Choir Practice
January 5	<p style="text-align: center;">PGCPS Infants &amp; Toddlers Program</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">10:00 a.m. at Oxon Hill Library</p>
January 6	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Season of Epiphany</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Begins</p>
January 6	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Arc of Prince George's County in Classroom</b> ( <i>Green Music Binders</i> )</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.</p>
January 6	<p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday Night Bible Study &amp; Choir Practice</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">7:00 p.m. Bible Study 8:00 pm. Choir Practice</p>
January 10	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Baptism of the Lord</i></b> ( <i>Rev. Dr. Martha A. Brown, Preaching</i> )</p>	9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship 12:30 p.m. Chime Choir Practice
January 12	<p style="text-align: center;">PGCPS Infants &amp; Toddlers Program</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">10:00 a.m. at HVCC</p>
January 13	<p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday Night Bible Study &amp; Choir Practice</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">7:00 p.m. Bible Study 8:00 pm. Choir Practice</p>

January 14	<b>National Care Financial Group Presentation</b>	6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
January 16	<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</b> Service and Luncheon Mt. Olivet Christian Church Baltimore, MD <i>“A Passion For Justice ”</i>	11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
January 17	<b><i>Second Sunday After Epiphany</i></b> ( <i>Rev. Dr. Martha A. Brown, Preaching</i> )	9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship 12:30 p.m. Chime Choir Practice
January 18	<b>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</b>	Church Office Closed!
January 19	PGCPS Infants & Toddlers Program	10:00 a.m. at HVCC
January 19	<b>The Arc of Prince George’s County</b> in Fellowship Hall ( <i>Wheelchair Fitness</i> )	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
January 20	<b>The Arc of Prince George’s County</b> in Fellowship Hall ( <i>Life Skills-Social Topics</i> )	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
January 20	Wednesday Night Bible Study & Choir Practice	7:00 p.m. Bible Study 8:00 pm. Choir Practice
January 21	<b>The Arc of Prince George’s County</b> in Fellowship Hall ( <i>Ambulatory Fitness</i> )	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
January 23	<b>Regional Board Meeting</b>	9:00 a.m.

	at HVCC	
January 23	<b>Leadership Team Meeting</b>	1:00 p.m.
January 24	<b><i>Third Sunday after Epiphany</i></b> ( <i>Rev. Dr. Martha A. Brown, Preaching</i> )	9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship 12:30 a.m. Chime Choir Practice
January 26	<b>The Arc of Prince George's County</b> in Fellowship Hall ( <i>Ambulatory Fitness</i> )	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
January 26	PGCPS Infants & Toddlers Program	10:00 a.m. at HVCC
January 27	<b>The Arc of Prince George's County</b> in Fellowship Hall ( <i>Life Skills – Social Topics</i> )	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
January 27	Wednesday Night Bible Study & Choir Practice	7:00 p.m. Bible Study 8:00 pm. Choir Practice
January 28	<b>The Arc of Prince George's County</b> in Fellowship Hall ( <i>Ambulatory Fitness</i> )	11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
January 31	<b><i>Fourth Sunday after Epiphany</i></b> ( <i>Rev. Dr. Martha A. Brown, Preaching</i> )	9:45 a.m. Sunday School 11:00 a.m. Worship 12:30 a.m. Chime Choir Practice
February 1	<b>African American History Month</b>	<b>Begins</b>
February 7	<b>Congregational Meeting</b>	Following the Worship Service
February 10	<b>Ash Wednesday</b>	Season of Lent Begins



February 15	<b>President's Day</b>	Church Office Closed!